

September 9, 2016



The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell,

Covering Kids and Families of Indiana appreciates the opportunity to comment on Indiana's proposal to amend its section 1115 demonstration project, Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0 (HIP 2.0), by extending its waiver of the nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT) benefit through January 31, 2018.

Established in 1999, Covering Kids and Families of Indiana is a nonprofit organization advocating health coverage for all Hoosiers. Today, CKF's twelve local coalitions provide health coverage outreach and enrollment services in 47 counties, connecting Hoosiers to programs such as Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), ACA Marketplace plans, and HIP 2.0. Our clients are typically high need, "high touch" individuals, often with multiple program eligibilities within the same family unit and usually requiring significant case management and follow-up assistance. Since HIP 2.0 was approved, our coalitions and partners have completed over 26,600 HIP 2.0 applications.

To date, our grassroots enrollment staff have not seen widespread evidence of delayed access to care or barriers attending appointments as a result of the waiver of NEMT benefits. Our clients generally have access to their own vehicles, public transportation, or a family member or friend with a car. In cases where these resources are not available, we have been able to refer enrollees to community organizations that will assist them with transportation.

We are mindful, however, that such early experiences do not always predict future need – especially as next-tier outreach efforts focus on more rural areas of the state and on later adopter populations who are likely to be higher need and to live in areas with inadequate public transportation options. For these reasons, we recommend the inclusion of NEMT benefits as a covered service under HIP 2.0.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at sthomas@ckfindiana.org or (317) 222-1836 if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Jo Thomas".

Susan Jo Thomas
Executive Director